

## FIRST SOVIET EXPERIMENT

The government of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic brands as criminal the policy of the government of tsarist Russia which, without the agreement of the peoples of Asia and under the guise of assuring the independence of these peoples, concluded with other states of Europe treaties concerning the East which had seizure as their ultimate object. The government of the R.S.F.S.R. unconditionally rejects that criminal policy not only as violating the sovereignty of the States of Asia but also as leading to organized brutal violence of European robbers on the living body of the peoples of the East.<sup>5</sup>

In its concrete provisions the treaty followed closely the earlier note of Karakhan, confirming in detail and by bilateral agreement the hitherto unilateral Soviet declaration. The frontier between two countries was to follow the 1881 line. Each signatory renounced any interference in the other's internal affairs. Each undertook not to tolerate the existence of organizations hostile to the other party in their respective territories. Soviet Russia obtained the right to demand the expulsion of hostile elements from the crews of Iranian vessels on the Caspian Sea. In return Iran obtained the right to maintain a naval force in the Caspian, which earlier treaties with Russia had prohibited. The renunciation of concessions and tsarist property by Soviet Russia was accompanied by the condition that these concessions and property could not be ceded by Iran to any third Power or its citizens. The most important political provision was the one that permitted Russia to send her troops to Iran should Iran become a base for a third party's war on Russia.

The treaty was an important development in Soviet-Iranian relations, but in view of earlier declarations of Moscow it did not con-

stitute any new or sensational act. The real concern of die Iranians was not what Soviet Russia was promising but what she was actually doing in Iran. So Chicherin's statement in February that the Soviet troops would stay in Iran as long as the British remained there had to many an Iranian a more profound meaning than the treaty phraseology.

Blow was it that Soviet troops were in Iranian territory? We know that after the November, 1917, revolution in Russia the Russian

s The full text may be found in A H. Hamzavi, *Persia and the Powers* (London, 1947).